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SHORT NOTES ON A COLONY OF THICK-THUMBED PIPISTRELLE NEAR MULU NATIONAL PARK

M.T. Abdullah

The Thick-thumbbed Pipistrelle (*Glischropus tylopus*) is distributed in scattered localities in Sarawak (Payne et al., 1985). Based on previous observations this species is also known in Niah, Wind Cave, and Gunung Ropiah near Bau (L.S. Hall and Nafisah Tahir, *pers. comm.*). Much of the ecology of this species in Sarawak is relatively unknown.

In July 2003, a group of seven Japanese NHK TV crew were granted permission to film various attractions in Mulu National Heritage. This author was asked to assist the filming crew to record on bats living inside hollow trees or bamboo. With the help of two local Berawan tourist guides, we visited three areas near a village at the confluence of Sungai Melanau and Sungai Tutoh. In the first two sites, we found bamboos with high and large stems of about 10 cm in diameter. We checked by knocking dead bamboo or damaged stems but found no sign of any bats.

At the third area, located about 20 minutes and south-west of the Royal Mulu Resort, the bamboo stems were short and smaller of about 5 to 6 cm in diameter. While knocking a dead bamboo stem, a bat flew out of the damaged part about 5 m in height. The bat encircled the bamboo clump for a few minutes and landed into a tiny hole (about 2cm) of another dead bamboo of about the same height. There were five other dead bamboos with tiny holes containing between one and five individuals. In one dead bamboo, there were 10 individuals emerged from the stem and perhaps two young ones remained behind. The species was identified as *Glischropus tylopus* with the typical pink thumb and foot pads. The pads are necessary to provide firm grip on the smooth surfaces of the bamboo during landing onto the stem and while roosting inside.

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by
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